



PADDLEWHEELS

Journal for The Whanganui Riverboat Restoration & Navigation Trust Inc. February 2007 - March 2007

This year we have had excellent weather through all of February and apart from a rough spell early in the month March has been the same. This certainly encourages people to take a cruise aboard P/S Waimarie. The good weather has also meant that swimming has become increasingly popular in our area of the river and we have been plagued by young people doing stupid things around the boats and the berths. The worst incident of this type happened when a young boy rode his bicycle off the end of the wharf right into the path of P/S Waimarie. Fortunately skipper Laurie Scott was able to avoid running him over. It seems apparent however that many young people are unable to understand the fact that boats do not stop like motor cars and in effect have no brakes. This very stupid young man was extremely lucky.

The summer as usual has bought its share of interesting visitors and anecdotes. Ted De Goldie a visitor from the UK was impressed and surprised to find a sisson steam engine onboard. Turns out Ted served his apprenticeship at the Sisson Works from 1953 to 1957 and then continued working for the Company until it closed. Another chap was telling us how during the NZ Rowing Champs in 1950 the river was in flood. Rowers were tougher in those days and competitions continued in spite of floods. A competitor named Jim Hill who rowed for Hamilton caught a submerged object with his oar, which catapulted him out of the boat and into the flooded river. Undeterred Jim swam back to the boat, clambered aboard and completed the race.

In early February the vessel was chartered by the Auckland Film Company for use in a New World Supermarket TV advertisement. This is now screening, keep a look out for P/S Waimarie

steaming along behind the boy on the bicycle in the New World Ad.

The New Zealand Army arranged to use the wharf and the area behind our building for an exercise involving protecting a fully loaded vessel, which was evacuating people from a war situation. The exercise was so realistic that an English tourist came rushing to the office to report that an incident was happening at our wharf and shouldn't we be canceling the 2pm sailing. It took some time to convince him that this was an exercise. We wish the army team all the best for their deployment as peacekeepers to the Solomon Islands.

On the staff front congratulations are due to Murray Greathead who has successfully completed all the examinations necessary to gain his Commercial Masters Qualification. He has now only to complete the final qualifying sea time to gain his ticket.

At the back of the Riverboat Centre work continues on the new riverbank walkway, which stretches from P/S Waimarie's wharf to the Town Bridge. It is certainly starting to take shape now.

A big thank you to all staff members, volunteers, sponsors and Trustees who have helped out over the February, March period. Your assistance goes a long way to keeping P/S Waimarie and the Riverboat Centre Museum operational.



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Wharf at Upokongaro

As mentioned in our last newsletter a blessing was held on the 26th February for the start of construction of a wharf at for P/S Waimarie at Upokongaro. Since then the works have got underway with a road way down to the site being formed and the site being cleared and leveled. Piles have been driven for the wharf and work has begun on placing a deck on these. We can now certainly look forward with some confidence to re introducing the stopover at Upokongaro next summer or even sooner when the project is completed.

Riverboat Centre Museum

The Riverboat Centre Museum displays continue to be improved thanks to the stalwart efforts of John Gray. Shortly Geoff Lawson & Martin Emerson will be on site to carry out further works on the Waimarie paddle display. A Perspex cover is to be constructed around the paddle to make it OSH compliant and then we will be able to safely activate the machinery to make the paddle turn. Visitors will then be able to observe first hand how the feathering paddle works. Other good news is that the Whanganui District Council has upgraded the footpath outside the front of the building, and it has been resealed. This is a large improvement as it was in very poor condition.

M.V. Wairua

The Wairua continues to undertake voyages to Hipango Park. The Friends of the Whanganui River chartered the vessel in February and took a trip to the park and certainly enjoyed themselves, the weather was excellent and it was good to see so many local river enthusiasts have a great day.

Hipango Park was looking good thanks to the efforts of the Rotary Club of Daybreak Wanganui earlier in the month. M.V. Wairua is available for all manner of trips by arrangement or charter. Contact the Riverboat Centre 06.3471863

Obituary

We received news that Lucy Williamson wife of the late Bruce Williamson, former owner and skipper of M.V. Waireka passed away.

Lucy has been of great help to the Museum and loaned to us an excellent display on the activities of Bruce and the Waireka during the 1960's amongst other bits and pieces she has donated. Our condolences to her family.

Volunteers

A big thank you again to all those who have helped out over the last two months. With the beginning of the winter timetable our annual spruce up will begin. Those who are able to help out with varnishing and painting please contact skipper Laurie Scott or Murray Greathead.

Incinerators

Project stalwart Ross Duncan is back in action again and has made a batch of incinerators, which are available from the Riverboat Centre.

Prices:

Incinerators	\$20.00
Tree Protectors	\$10.00

Merchandise

WE now have in stock New Zealand Touchstone pendants. These are stones that have been hand collected from Gemstone Beach at Birdlings Flat and then carved. The price of these pendants is \$35.00 Great gift for Mothers Day !